

DECEMBER 2025

-

JANUARY 2026

MINISTER'S LETTER FROM REV TINA BROOKER

Dear church family,

I have to make a Christmas confession. I absolutely love to go on a long walk around the streets where I live in the evening when it's all dark and crisp and to see all the Christmas lights outside peoples homes. I love the twinkly lights and the Christmas trees in the windows, all dressed up with tinsel.



It reminds me of the scripture: *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."* (John 1:5)

At Christmas we celebrate that Jesus, the Light of the World, stepped into human history, not in a blaze of royal splendour, but in the quiet vulnerability of a manger. His birth was God's declaration that love will always have the final word.

Our world still waits for light. We see pain, uncertainty, and struggle all around us, in our news and sometimes in our own lives. Yet Christmas reminds us that even a single flame can transform the night. The Christ Child comes not to remove every shadow instantly, but to dwell *with us* in the midst of them, bringing hope that grows brighter with every act of love.

As Methodists, we are a people of grace and service. The Christmas story calls us to carry that light, to be bearers of hope in our homes, streets, and communities. Perhaps the best way to celebrate is to reflect Christ's light where we are, by listening to someone who is lonely, helping where there's need, or simply offering kindness, whatever form that may take.

This Christmas, may our church here at Radford Rd, shine not just with candles and carols, wonderful as they are, but with the warmth of Christ's love shared freely to all.

And as we step into a brand new year together, I find myself reflecting on the words of Isaiah: *"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"* (Isaiah 43:19). What a wonderful reminder that our God is always at work, creating, renewing, and leading us forward in love. A new year gives us the chance to pause and reflect on where God might be leading us.

John Wesley encouraged the people called Methodists to "go on to perfection" to keep growing in love. My prayer is that 2026 will be a year when we do just that, loving God more deeply, loving our neighbours more fully, and allowing God's Spirit to continue to shape us into a people of hope and grace.

May you know His peace and joy this Christmas and always, and I look forward to seeing you at one of our Christmas services.

As we journey into the new year, let's hold on to the truth that the same God who guided us yesterday walks beside us today and His promises are as sure as ever.

Every blessing for Christmas and the year ahead,

Revd Tina

DIARY DECEMBER 2025

Sun 7th Dec 10.30am Service led by the Elders

Tues 9th Dec 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 11th Dec 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 12th Dec 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sat 13th Dec 9-11am Big Breakfast

Sun 14th Dec 10.30am Christingle Service led by Mrs Sheila Brown

Tues 16th Dec 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 18th Dec 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 19th Dec 6.30om Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 21st Dec Carol Service led by Rev Tina Brooker

Thurs 25th Dec **10.00am Christmas Day Service** led by Mr Corin Pilling

Sun 28th Dec 10.30am service led by Rev Tina Brooker



DIARY JANUARY 2026

Sun 4th Jan 10.30am Service led by Mr Nigel Saxton

Tues 6th Jan 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 8th Jan 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 9th Jan 6.30pm, Lillington Free Church Joint Bible Study

Sat 10th Jan 9-11am Big Breakfast

Sun 11th Jan 10.30am Service led by Rev David Butterworth

Tues 13th jan 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 15th Jan 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 16th Jan 6.30pm, Lillington Free Church Joint Bible Study

Sun 18th Jan 10.30am Service led by Rev Nick Stanyon

Tues 20th Jan 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 22nd Jan 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 23rd Jan 6.30pm, Lillington Free Church Joint Bible Study

Sun 25th Jan 10.30am Covenant Service led by Rev Tina Brooker

Tues 27th Jan 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 29th Jan 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 30th Jan 6.30pm Lillington Free Church Joint Bible Study



COFFEE ROTA

(PLEASE ARRANGE SWAP IF NECESSARY)

Sun Dec 7th Bridget and Margaret

Sun Jan 4th Brenda and Alan

Sun Dec 14th Jean and Julia

Sun Jan 11th Margaret and Sally

Sun Dec 21st Mary and Jeni

Sun Jan 18th Mary and Julia

Sun Dec 28th Ruth and John

Sun Jan 25th Jean and Bridget

Would the first person on the rota please bring milk, and the second bring biscuits.

Thank you!

ALL ARE WELCOME



Every Thursday morning we meet in the church vestibule to act as a “Warm Hub” for anyone who cares to come and join us. We are open to all, as the name suggests. So pop along one Thursday, and perhaps bring a friend or neighbour to enjoy a toasted teacake, with tea or coffee and maybe try the quiz, play a game, or simply sit and chat.

BIG BREAKFAST



Big Breakfast takes place on the second Saturday of every month, offering fantastic value for a delicious breakfast of your choice; profits go to our Mission Project (see below). Pop the dates in your diary, and come along to enjoy tasty food and good company.



Sat 13th December

Sat 10th January

9-11am



Our Mission Project this year is MAF. Mission Aviation Fellowship is the world's largest humanitarian air operator. For over 75 years they have been flying light aircraft over jungles, mountains, swamps and deserts. This has enabled more than 1,500 aid, development and mission organisations to bring medical care, emergency relief and long term development. Their pilots and personnel deliver relief workers, doctors, pastors, school books, food, medicine, anything that can only be safely and speedily delivered by air. Faithful supporters give and pray to make all of this possible



FAMILY NEWS

Please remember in your prayers those who have been bereaved

Comfort the families and friends who grieve

Those who are ill, and especially those known to us

We ask that they may soon be restored to full health

Those who have worries and anxieties

Give them peace and comfort in the knowledge that you are close to them. Please especially remember in your prayers **Ann, Anne, Frank and Jane, Geoff, Gill & Eric, Hazel, Rosemary, Vi; all those involved with the Night Shelter**

May they know of your nearness to them.

Special good wishes to Marjorie C for her 90th birthday



JHERELL

On September 28th we were very sad to say our goodbyes to Jherell. It was her last service with us before leaving for the USA to join her family.

Jherell has been a very active member of the church for over 9 years. She was always a very friendly, happy willing person to have in the church. We were very pleased to welcome her family when they visited her, her father even did a reading for us. She was very involved, doing PowerPoint, being an Elder and also, along with her friends, cooking Big Breakfast. She was also a member of the music group.



When she was not working in hospital as a theatre nurse, she was off travelling around the world with friends or family.

We had a collection for Jherell and Margaret B made the presentation to her, which she gratefully accepted through her tears.

We will all miss Jherell very much, but wish her every success for her future and all she does over there.

RADFORD ROAD CHRISTMAS CARD 2025



Every year we produce a Christmas card which is sent out to all who worship at Radford Rd Church. People who add a message to the card donate some money which is then sent to Christian Aid, We usually buy gifts, which can include a cow, hens or goats.



If you would like to donate this year, please can you give me your donation and message and I will add your greeting to the card. Thank you - **Bridget**

HARVEST FESTIVAL 28.09,25



Our Harvest Festival was held on September 28th and led by Rev. Tina Brooker. During the service gifts of tinned and dried goods were brought forward by generous members of the congregation and received by Margaret B and Jherell. These were then donated to the Night Shelter. The fresh produce was sold after the service to members of the congregation



We were also pleased to have our music group of Margaret and George H and John E play for the morning hymns. The beautiful flower arrangements were done by Margaret B and Kath. Thank you to all involved.



MAINTENANCE REPORT - NOVEMBER 2025

Work completed –

New codes have been assigned to the key safes by the main gate so if you usually access the Church keys using the safes then please let me know so I can give you the new codes.

It is very disappointing that the roof repairs have not yet been completed, so the scaffolding is still in place.

Work to do

- Complete the roof repairs
- Repair of the dishwasher in the vestibule kitchen
- The fire alarm system has been checked but there are a couple of emergency lights that require replacing

a leaking radiator in the hall corridor requires replacement

Manse - No date yet for the completion of the sale of the Manse.

Bridget



ECO CHURCH - MAKE YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

it's the time of year that homes are decorated in all their festive glory. Have you had the same decorations for a few years now? Do you fancy adding a few more to your collection? If you like the idea of having a few more nature-inspired items in your home, try making your own eco-friendly Christmas decorations.

PINE CONE ORNAMENTS



To make these, you'll need: pinecones, thin wire, ribbon, strong craft glue or a glue gun, and a few nuts - hazelnuts are pictured, but any small nuts will do.

Wrap the thin wire around the top of the pine cone and twist it around into a large loop, securing at the base. Now tie your ribbon around the top of your pine cone and wire – ending with a bow. Finally, using the glue gun or craft glue, attach the nuts to the top of the pine cone and ribbon. Allow it to dry completely before hanging it on your tree.

DRIED CITRUS SLICES

You can use oranges, lemons or grapefruit to make pretty decorations for Christmas. To dry the fruit for Christmas decorations, slice them thinly, pat them dry, and bake them in an oven at a low temperature (around 170-200°F or 93-95°C) for 3-4 hours, flipping them hourly. Place slices in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet or on a wire rack for better air circulation, and let them cool completely before use to ensure they are fully dry and will not spoil.

You can hang them individually or string them together in garlands - and they will make your home smell lovely, especially if you stud them with a few dried cloves before putting thm into the oven



SAFEGUARDING

Radford Road Church believes each person has a value and dignity as part of God's creation. We are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirm that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount. If you have any concerns, either for yourself or for another person, please speak in confidence to one of our **Safeguarding Officers: Sue Darlison and Jean Young**, or to one of the ministers. Phone numbers on the final page

REMEMBER: The Daily service BBC Radio 4extra Monday to Friday at 9.45 am and available on the BBC Sounds app. Sunday Worship at 8.10am Radio 4 on Sundays.



AND

"Songs of Praise" BBC TV every Sunday (Times vary)



WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL CIVIC AWARD CEREMONY 3RD OCT 2025

On Friday 3rd October, Warwick District's 'unsung heroes' were honoured in a civic reception held at the Royal Pump Rooms, among them our very own Bridget H. Twelve individuals were conferred with the honour of "Freedom of the District" an honorary title awarded as a mark of distinction upon the person whom the Council wishes to honour, as having rendered eminent service to the community of Warwick District.



Freemen and Freewomen are recognised as "carrying out fund-raising, community or charitable activities and making a difference to the health, wellbeing and daily lives of those they support."

Bridget was nominated for her services to Girlguiding for over 30 years: she started as a Guides leader in 1991, then moved to Young Leaders (14-18) before starting the Rainbows group at Radford Road, later taking on the Brownies as well. Although she is no longer a leader, the Guiding movement still takes up more than an hour a week—just this year she has done the Monopoly Run (a real-time version of the board game held in Central London), camped with District guides, been to Denmark with the Rangers, and travelled to Morocco with the Guiders, and in October visited the Guide House in Mexico for 2 weeks!

Bridget's nomination for the award was also based on service to the local community in her roles as a volunteer for LWS Night Shelter, Street Pastors, the Canal and River Trust, and the Tall Ships Youth Trust, which promotes adventurous voyages for disabled people

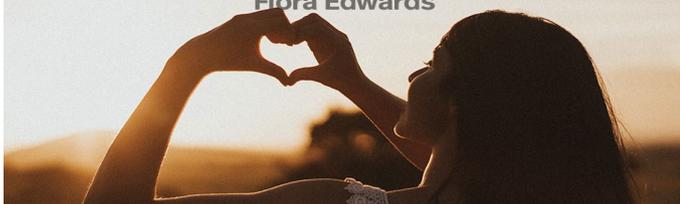


And as if all that wasn't enough, she also deals with all Radford Road Church's numerous property problems and repairs AND organises our lettings, which bring in a considerable income for the church. Oh, and she's a Church Elder, too!

I think we can all agree that Bridget thoroughly deserves her award – well done indeed.

**In helping others,
we shall help ourselves,
for whatever good we give out
completes the circle and
comes back to us.**

Flora Edwards



CONGRATULATIONS!

On 8th December 2025, the 15th Leamington Brownie Pack, who meet in Radford Rd church hall, will celebrate their 50th anniversary



MARINES BAPTISED IN ASSAULT COURSE WATER TANK

Royal Marine recruits are increasingly turning to Christianity – and are even using their assault course’s water tank to perform baptisms. Commando fledglings attempting to earn the coveted green beret are now regularly attending Sunday services at the training centre in Lymstone, Devon.

In the last 18 months church attendance at the base has risen rapidly and now often exceeds the on-site chapel’s 150 capacity. And at least 26 recruits underwent a full immersion baptism earlier this year in the training centre’s Regain Tank – a 4ft deep tank with ropes suspended above which candidates have to traverse.



A recruit wades through the tank at the Lymstone training centre

The increase in church attendance appears to be prompted by young men looking for meaning and direction rather than fears of deploying to a combat zone or a future war with Russia, recent studies by the Bible Society suggest.

Details of the new-found interest in Christianity were revealed in an article entitled *The Quiet Revival for the Globe* And *Laurel* magazine – a Royal Marine publication. In the article, Royal Naval chaplain Reverend A Gascoyne wrote: ‘Many recruits drop into the bible session on Thursday nights bringing their questions and sharing their experiences.’

He stated that all of the recruits he had spoken to about their interest in God and baptism said they were searching for a new moral code. He continued: ‘My impression from talking with recruits is that many are unimpressed by the ‘fridge magnet’ slogans and philosophies that litter social media feeds.

They are looking for a lived experience and a moral code that is both coherent and can stand up under pressure. Many have had little or no opportunity to explore the teachings and mindsets of Jesus Christ and when introduced, find there is a bedrock there that they felt they can build a strong life upon.

Elsewhere in the Armed Forces the number of troops attending church services is also increasing—part of a growing trend among young people, especially men between 18-24, who have started regularly attending services - up from 4% in 2018 to 16% in 2024

As reported in the Mail on Sunday, Sept 7th 2025

WARWICKSHIRE ETERNAL WALL

On Wednesday November 5th 2025 a ground-breaking ceremony was held, signalling the start of construction of the Warwickshire Eternal Wall. It will be the largest Christian Monument in the UK.

A £40m fundraising target was met, it is scheduled to be completed by 2028. and will be visible to motorway drivers, HS2 passengers and people landing at Birmingham Airport. The Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer will be built between the M6 and M42 near Coleshill, Warwickshire, and will be about 51m (167ft) tall, and is in the form of a Mobius strip (a one-sided shape that it has only one edge)

It will contain about one million bricks, project leaders said, with each representing a story of Jesus answering someone's prayer.

The project was led by Former Leicester City FC chaplain Richard Gamble, who said: "I am delighted we are creating a monument that will share a million stories of hope and that people will be able to discover Jesus, who listens to and answers prayer." He said he was grateful to everyone who had backed the monument, which included more than 20,000 supporters.

It is hoped the site, which will also include 10 acres of green space and a visitor centre, will attract 250,000 annual visitors.

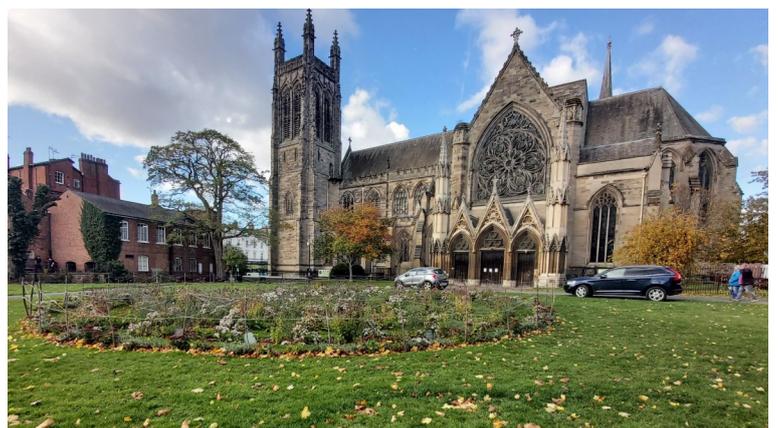


Artist's impression of the Eternal Wall

A LIVING LABYRINTH

All Saints churchyard has undergone an inspired regeneration which aims to create a peaceful space that promotes nature, well-being and serenity.

The project's show-piece is a labyrinth designed for contemplative walking, with intricate shapes and distinct patterns.



"We can now see our vision of creating a restful, beautiful space for our whole community being delivered, supported by ARC's tremendous knowledge, expertise and outreach experience"

Fr. Christopher Wilson



The Twelve Days of Christmas Praise

by - Carroll Roberson

1. On the first day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me... Salvation...full and free.
2. On the second day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
3. On the third day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
4. On the fourth day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
5. On the fifth day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
6. On the sixth day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...Power from on high, Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
7. On the seventh day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...a Body glorified, Power from on high, Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
8. On the eighth day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...a Robe and a Crown, a Body glorified, Power from on high, Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
9. On the ninth day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...Mansions up above, a Robe and a Crown, a Body glorified, Power from on high, Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
10. On the tenth day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...a Street of pure gold, Mansions up above, a Robe and a Crown, a Body glorified, Power from on high, Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
11. On the eleventh day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...a Thousand Tongues to sing, a Street of pure gold, Mansions up above, a Robe and a Crown, a Body glorified, Power from on high, Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.
12. On the twelfth day of Christmas, Jesus gave to me...Eternity to praise, a Thousand Tongues to sing, a Street of pure gold, Mansions up above, a Robe and a Crown, a Body glorified, Power from on high, Joy for my soul, Love for all men, Peace in my heart, Everlasting life and Salvation...full and free.



NEW YEAR'S DAY

Nowadays, Christmas and New Year often run together into one long festive season, although some people have to return to work between the two. Many folk can't wait to pack away the Christmas tree and all the decorations, while others prefer to wait until Twelfth Night (5th January) the eve of Epiphany.



Coming just over halfway through the Twelve Days OF Christmas, in times past the New Year brought a shift in mood. Importantly, like Christmas itself, this too was a Christian feast-day: 1 January is the eighth day after Christmas, which meant it was the day when Jesus was circumcised according to Jewish law. The first feast of the medieval calendar year was the Circumcision of Christ, and it was seen as an important part of the Christmas story – a marker of Christ's Jewish identity and his fleshly, vulnerable humanity. This was the first time Christ's blood was shed, medieval sermons say, so it foreshadowed his future death, looking ahead from Christmastide to Easter. Preachers also drew a connection with Jesus's naming and therefore with baptism, rebirth and new beginnings – appropriate New Year themes.



There were secular customs associated with the New Year, too. In late medieval Britain, New Year's Day – not Christmas – was the one day in the season for exchanging presents. These weren't Christmas presents; they had a specific purpose, because the idea was that giving someone a gift on New Year's Day would bring them good luck and prosperity in the coming year. It was an 'old custom', says one medieval writer, that on New Year's Day 'they that be knit together by love specially [are accustomed] to give each other year's-gifts and desire good year to come to them.' If you couldn't afford a lavish gift, you might send a poem, or just good wishes



SUN 16TH NOVEMBER 2025

As we were unexpectedly without a preacher, and with only two Elders available, it was decided that on this occasion we would join the congregation of our Methodist sister church at Dale Street. The service of Holy Communion was led by the Reverends Tina Brooker and Jim Dobson.

There were also two "guest speakers" at the service talking about the work of the Leamington Street Pastors - Dale Street's Andrew Emm and Radford Road's Bridget Halpin, who both volunteer for this work. Pairs of Street Pastors, who come from many Christian churches in Leamington patrol the pub/ club area of the town from 10pm –2am on Friday and Saturday nights, chatting to



Andrew and Bridget being interviewed by Tina



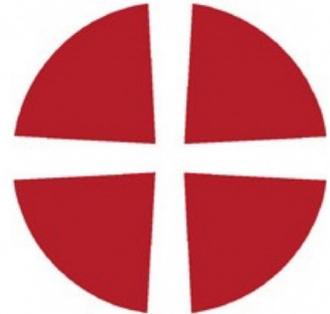
Contents of a Pastor's rucksack

people, acting as a calming presence in support of the police, and offering practical help if needed in the form of bottles of water, foil blankets and flip-flops (when high heels become too uncomfortable!), sweeping up broken glass, or helping to arrange a taxi home.

Christianity in action!

In October, we were told of plans for a new idea to be trialled for 6 weeks next year in the South Warwickshire Methodist District. For those who haven't read it, here is the letter we were given

One in Heart
in Spirit
in Worship
South Warwickshire Methodists



One Church to Pentecost 2026

Dear Friends,

This is a first instalment of exciting news about plans across the circuit for worshipping together leading up to Pentecost 2026.

The recent Circuit meeting endorsed a proposal brought by the Leadership team to worship God together as one church family for 6 weeks culminating in a Pentecost celebration on Sunday 24th May. To encourage each other as well look to the future. To thrive as well seek to participate in the building of God's Kingdom. The aim is to build each other up and to promote growth, mission, spiritually and in numbers as a Circuit for the long term. In order to facilitate this there will be no morning services held in our churches. We are better together!

There are many details yet to be sorted out, as you will understand. We anticipate that we will meet at the same one single site, not any of our existing churches, not least because none of them are big enough.

As we lead up to this time together we hope to be able to offer a Lent Housegroup to each member in the life of the circuit.

During this time we will also be encouraging churches to not hold business meetings e.g. Church Councils.

FAQs

1. Will my church still be open on a Sunday morning?

No. There will be no other morning services on the plan.

2. Will there be evening services?

Yes, we hope to offer a variety of evening services with more information to follow.

3. Where will the joint service be held?

We are currently working to hire a venue which is likely to be in the Warwick area. Once we have further details we will send them out.

4. How will we get there?

The Circuit is looking to provide coaches from Stratford (via Kineton & Wellesbourne) and from Kenilworth (via Cubbington). Those living more centrally in the Circuit will be encouraged to car share. Further details will follow.

5. What time will the service be?

This will be confirmed in due course. Probably mid morning.

6. What will the worship be like?

We envisage the services will have a broadly similar style and feel to a 'normal Sunday morning.' However, there will be some differences. Each service will be collaborative in nature, using the skills of Worship Leaders, Local Preachers and Ministers together. We hope there will be both organ / piano as well as a worship group. The biggest difference will be our size. On a normally Sunday morning approx. 320 people gather for worship in our 12 churches. Our hope is that all those people gather together in one service. Just think how amazing that might feel.

7. I like my small local community church where I know everyone and they know me. This is important to me

Methodism began as a movement of small societies who joined together to form churches. Our hope is to re-find this model which led to a deepening of discipleship and a growth in number.

8. Our church has some children, how will it affect them?

We will offer a joint Junior Church or those who wish to attend. We will also offer the ability for any young person to stay in the worship service. We aim to be as flexible as possible.

9. Do I have to be in a Housegroup?

No, but we encourage everyone to participate. If you have specific needs please speak to your minister who will be able to offer support and help us to plan a variety of times and spaces for the housegroups to meet.

These will take place at different times and places to allow as many as possible to attend.

10. My church has a number of midweek activities e.g. bread church, toddlers, bible study, etc will these continue?

Yes, absolutely. Church are encouraged to continue their usually missional and discipleship activities.

11. Can I just take these Sundays off?

You can, but this is a unique opportunity to worship God together as one church family. To encourage each other as well look to the future and to how we can best survive and even thrive as well seek to participate in the building of God's Kingdom. We are better together!

12. What can I do?

In the near future we will be asking for help in planning how these events will work and especially asking for people to host or lead a Housegroup for the period of Lent. Encourage others to do the same,

In the meantime please continue to pray for the Circuit Leadership Team and for the Circuit Staff and Stewards of each Church as we seek to discern to build a sustainable vision for the future of the South Warwickshire Methodist Circuit.

13. I have lots more questions not answered here?

It is early days yet and we know people will want to know more, equally we can't anticipate everyone's questions. This Question and Answer list will be updated from time to time on the Circuit website. Please send your questions to

onechurchtopentecost@gmail.com.

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GUIDES	Emma
RANGERS	Sarah
BEAVERS/CUBS	Matthew
SCOUTS	Mark

(If you need to get in touch with anyone on the list without a phone number, please use the church email to request details)



Please feel free to comment on this or any other edition - we welcome your opinions. Just contact Jean or Sally

Thank you for reading this electronic copy of Radford Road Church Newsletter.

A limited number of newsletters are being printed and most people are receiving electronic copies. This is a much greener, cheaper and less time-consuming way of producing the magazine.

At present 66 copies of this Magazine are being sent out.

Please email Jean or Sally by Sun 25th January 2026 if you have any items suitable for publication in the next issue of the newsletter